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Craft Videos Need a Professional Touch

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the ability to organize ideas into useful segments.

Mastelli said that one problem many people face when being photographed is the ability to come across as warm and friendly when all that's facing them is a cold camera lens. Those who are successful at conveying warmth to unseen viewers are those who are able to project their ideas easily. Mastelli likened performing in front of a camera to talking on the telephone. Most people can put empathy and warmth in their voices for someone on the other end of a phone, even though there's no one there to see.

On the camera-end of a successful video, the person shooting should be sympathetic to the craft. Mastelli said, "The camera has to be more intelligent and has to choose what you will see." If the person on the camera just runs the camera, while the person being filmed calls the shots, as often happens with some craft videos, then the finished product suffers.

Of the many jobs that a director must do, one important task is to remind the craftspeople where he was when the action stopped. Another job of a good director is to try and see the video through the eyes of the future viewer. Mastelli stops the progress of a shooting in order to ask the craftspeople why a particular tool is needed, or why a certain technique has to be done that way. These off-camera questions posed by the director allow the on-camera craftspeople to interject phrases such as, "you may wonder why I'm doing it this way," and then answer the question. Ideally, Mastelli likes to sit in first on a workshop or a demonstration given by the artist in

order to get a feel for his or her working style.

Not every craft translates well into video, Mastelli said. The most successful ones involve action and movement. Woodturning is a good candidate for video with its multiplicity of movements. Crafts that involve assembly of parts and seeing where one part fits into the whole make for interesting videos, so garment construction or basketry would be a good choice.

Incremental crafts, such as knitting, would not be good candidates, he felt, as there wasn't much action involved. Surprisingly enough, pottery was another craft that Mastelli felt was not a good choice for video productions. While he acknowledged that watching someone throw a pot can be fascinating, not much information on how to throw a pot yourself is conveyed by the movements of the craftspeople.

Expanding Markets

Taunton Press has had to work at expanding the markets for its videos, as anyone does with a new product. The built-in audience from their magazines has accounted for the majority of their sales. But neither book stores nor video stores are very enthusiastic about carrying informational videos, and an effective series of space ads in other magazines would be expensive. One possibility that Taunton Press would like to explore is selling their tapes to libraries and schools.

As for trends in the video market, Mastelli felt that there will be more and more print and video combinations. Booklets are being packaged with the tapes more often. Since video is a linear medium, you must run through a large amount of tape to get to the particular section of the tape that you want to review. A booklet can list the different sections of the video with their corresponding counter numbers to make locating a segment easier, and it can serve as quick reference to remind you of what was on the tape. Philosophical issues can also be included in a booklet, along with a broad outline of the whole work which would be boring to see on tape.

Since the selling prices of craft videos range roughly between \$15 and \$40, Mastelli feels they compare favorably with workshop prices. He quickly goes on to stress that in order to be a good seller, and to compare favorably with a live workshop, a video must convey an intense enough experience so that the viewer will find that developing or expanding a skill this way is as exciting as as a live workshop might be.

NANCY SMELTZER is a fiber artist in Columbia, Maryland.

Twelve Times

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bring the news to our readers every month, even during the summer," Copeland said. He added that the strengthening of the paper's staff will allow *The Crafts Report* to provide this improved service to its readers on a monthly basis from now on.

The subscription price will be adjusted to \$19.25 a year (\$35.50 for two years) to reflect the proportionate cost of delivering a twelfth issue and to partially offset the recent increase in postal rates, Copeland explained. All subscriptions that are renewed before the end of December will be honored at the old rate of \$17.50 a year or \$32.50 for two years.

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Furniture Fair Gets Extra Day, Benefits AIDS Fight

The International Contemporary Furniture Fair will add an extra day to its May 21-23 schedule, George Little Management announced. The show will be open to the public on May 24 at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in New York City. Proceeds from admission fees will be donated to Design Industries Foundation for AIDS (DIFFA), which raises funds and awards grants to AIDS-related projects and organizations nationwide.

Exhibits at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair will include one-of-a-kind art furniture, production furniture, lighting, wallcoverings, and floorcoverings. Details are available from George Little Management, Inc., Two Park Avenue, Suite 1100, New York, NY 10016 (212-686-6070).

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